Floaties in Your Water?
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It's a stifling 95 degrees outside. Not a breeze blowing. It's a perfect day for a splash in the water. You get the pool, lay the hose in the bottom and begin to fill it. The kids jump in and begin splashing and playing. Johnny has to use the bathroom, but it's too far to the house, so he decides to go in the pool without telling anyone. Oh, it'll mix with the grass, dirt and any other contaminates brought into the pool. Well, not only is this unhealthy for the kids, but by laying the hose in the pool you created a cross connection. A cross connection is any actual or potential connection between the public water supply and a source of contamination or pollution. Should the pressure in the main water system drop, backsiphonage or backflow could occur and the contaminated pool water would be drawn into the potable water line.

A crude example of this would to give your bottle of water to your child who has a mouthful of food, to drink. The bottle of water represents the water supply; the cross connection occurs in the child's mouth. When the child stops drinking the pressure is lost allowing backwash in the bottle. After he/she takes a drink, whatever food was in the child's mouth is often seen floating in the bottle. Pretty gross, uh?

One way, you can keep you and your family free from potential water contamination is being aware of cross connections such as the following:

1. Garden hoses attached to potable water supply lying in buckets of standing water, chemicals, puddles, swimming pools, pet watering dishes, mop buckets and chemical sprayers. All hose ends should be above the flood rim of any container.
2. Faucets should never come in contact with standing water, chemicals, etc. This can happen while watering oversized potted plants in the sink or while cleaning large pots.
3. Be aware that some irrigation systems are connected to both the city water supply and the irrigation water supply. The sprinkler heads must not be submerged in water.

In general, be aware of and avoid possible cross connections which could contaminate our potable water supply.